

Blue Grass Summer 2002

Contact Us

Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office

370 Highland Park Drive
Suite 2
Richmond, KY 40475

Outreach Office Hours

Monday–Friday
8:30 a.m.–5 p.m.
Other hours by appointment

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Blue Grass Army Depot: Making chemical weapons history

The Blue Grass region of Central Kentucky is known for its fascinating history and rich culture. But did you know that this beautiful and largely industrial and agricultural area also plays a vital role in national and global affairs? The U.S. Army is planning to make chemical weapons history at the Blue Grass Army Depot located in Richmond, Ky. The Army has been safely storing a stockpile of chemical weapons at the depot since 1944 and now plans to dispose of the weapons and provide meaningful opportunities for the public to get involved in the project.

What are chemical weapons?

Chemical weapons are sturdy containers of various types and sizes holding toxic chemical agents. Contrary to popular belief, these chemicals are not gases. In their original form, they are actually liquids, but over long periods of time they can become thick and sludge-like.

How will the weapons be destroyed?

The disposal technology that will be used within the facility has not been selected.

The following four technologies are under consideration:

- The Army's "baseline" incineration technology,
- Cryofracture followed by neutralization and supercritical water oxidation,
- Neutralization followed by supercritical water oxidation and gas phase chemical reduction, and
- Electrochemical oxidation (SILVER II™).

The Department of Defense will select one of these technologies for use at the depot based on numerous technical and environmental studies, as well as input from the community.

Who will destroy the weapons?

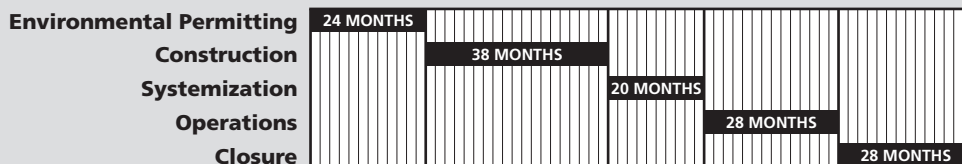
The Army's Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization is responsible for safely disposing of the stockpile. Once a technology is selected, the Army will award a contract to build, test, operate and close the Blue Grass facility. Many other organizations are working in partnership with the Army to complete this mission successfully. Among these are the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection and the Environmental Protection Agency, Region IV.

How long will it take to destroy the weapons?

Selection of the disposal technology is expected in 2003. After that, the Army will apply for permits for the facility. Upon receipt of the permits, facility construction will begin, and a period of testing will occur until operations start. Once disposal operations are complete, a period to close the facility and ensure the cleanliness of the surrounding areas will follow.

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Technology Decision Timeline



The Kentucky Citizens' Advisory Commission meets the second Monday of each month. Most meetings include time for public input and questions. Local citizens may request to receive meeting notices and minutes by mail or e-mail.

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How will the environment be protected?

Protection of the unique environment and agriculture surrounding the Blue Grass Army Depot is one of the Army's top priorities. Therefore, the permits for the facility will be based on special studies conducted locally. Additionally, during disposal activities, the environment will be monitored continually to ensure the operations are protective of the area.

What is the Kentucky Environmental Working Integrated Process Team (WIPT)?

The WIPT was chartered by the Department of Defense to expedite the planning, development and implementation of all aspects of the environmental permitting process for a chemical weapons disposal facility at the Blue Grass Army Depot. The Blue Grass WIPT meetings are held approximately every other month in Lexington or Richmond and are open to the public. Meetings are advertised in the Richmond Register, Berea Citizen and other local newspapers.

What is the Citizens' Advisory Commission?

This commission, often called the CAC for short, is made up of nine members appointed by the governor of Kentucky. Seven are local citizens and two are representatives of state agencies that work closely with the chemical weapons disposal program. The commission provides a local perspective to the Army so that it may manage the chemical disposal program in the most positive way for the community.

The Kentucky CAC meets the second Monday of each month. Most meetings include time for public input and questions. Local citizens may request to receive meeting notices and minutes by mail or e-mail. For more information on the current issues the commission is considering, to find out the upcoming meeting schedule, or to be added to the mailing list, please contact the CAC office at (859) 625-1528 or fax at (859) 625-1502.

Got questions about chemical weapons disposal?

One of the most valuable services the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office (ORO) has to offer is a Speaker's Bureau Campaign. This campaign provides community members with the opportunity to learn more about chemical stockpile disposal from professionals with years of knowledge and experience.

The ORO can arrange for a program expert to address your church, civic group, school or business organization. You can reach the outreach office staff at (859) 626-8944 or fax at (859) 626-8949. You also are invited to visit the office at 370 Highland Park Drive, Suite 2, in Richmond or complete the response form on page 4 of this newsletter and

mail it in. The office is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Additional office hours are available upon request.



Outreach Office staff members are on hand to answer your questions about chemical weapons disposal.

U.S. Army Photo

Where are the weapons located?

The chemical weapons are located at the Blue Grass Army Depot, whose mission is to safeguard a ready supply of conventional munitions and provide chemical defense equipment and special operations support to the Department of Defense. The Blue Grass Chemical Activity is a tenant of the 15,000-acre depot and is responsible for storing and monitoring the chemical weapons stockpile. Blue Grass stores a portion of our nation's chemical weapons stockpile. The rest of the stockpile is stored at seven other sites located across the continental United States. Part of the stockpile was previously stored and safely destroyed on Johnston Island in the Pacific.

Aberdeen, Maryland and Newport, Indiana

The Army is accelerating disposal of the bulk chemical agent stored in Maryland and Indiana. The accelerated neutralization processes will destroy the agent nearly two years ahead of schedule. The Army continues to investigate viable technologies to accelerate agent destruction at the other stockpile locations.

Anniston, Alabama

Systemization, or testing, of the facility's systems and equipment is underway. Incineration operations are scheduled to begin in the fall.

Hermiston, Oregon

The Oregon facility currently is undergoing systemization, with incineration operations scheduled to begin in 2003.

Johnston Island, Pacific

The JACADS team continues to proceed with closure activities including processing secondary waste and removing excess equipment.

Pine Bluff, Arkansas

The Army has completed approximately 90 percent construction of the Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility, which will employ incineration technology.

Pueblo, Colorado

The Army released the final Environmental Impact Statement recommending neutralization followed by biodegradation as the preferred technology to destroy Pueblo Chemical Depot's mustard agent stockpile. The undersecretary of defense is expected to make a final technology decision later this year.

Tooele, Utah

The facility is preparing to incinerate VX nerve agent and expects to complete the disposal campaign in summer 2003.

The Blue Grass Chemical Activity is a tenant of the 15,000-acre depot and is responsible for storing and monitoring the chemical weapons stockpile. Blue Grass stores a portion of our nation's chemical weapons stockpile.

Public Meetings

The U.S. Army Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization (PMCD) recently published its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on chemical weapons disposal. The PMCD study assesses the potential impacts of the design, construction, operation and closure of a chemical weapons disposal facility at Blue Grass Army Depot, Richmond, Ky. Please come and let the Army know your opinions on this important issue. Your input counts!

Thursday, July 11, 2002
11 a.m.–2 p.m. **AND** 5–8 p.m.

Eastern Kentucky University
Stratton Building, Posey Auditorium
Kit Carson Drive, Richmond, KY 40475
(Parking is available in the Perkins Building lot across the street)

For more information...

Contact Greg Mahall, Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization (PMCD) Public Outreach and Information Office, at 1-800-488-0648. For local information about the Chemical Stockpile Program, contact the Army's Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office at 859-626-8944.

We want to hear from you ...

The Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office serves as a clearinghouse of information about the chemical weapons stockpile stored at Blue Grass Army Depot and the Army's plans for chemical weapons disposal. The outreach office has informational materials that can address your questions or concerns.

If you would like more information about the Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office, please telephone (859) 626-8944 or complete this form and mail it to:

Blue Grass Chemical Stockpile
Outreach Office
370 Highland Park Drive, Suite 2
Richmond, KY 40475

Would you like to be added to our mailing list?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you like an information packet mailed to you?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If you answered yes to either of these questions, please complete the following:

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone (optional) _____
E-mail (optional) _____

The outreach office schedules speaking presentations that can be given to large or small community groups, clubs, organizations, etc. If you know of a community group that might be interested, please complete the following:

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone (optional) _____
E-mail (optional) _____

